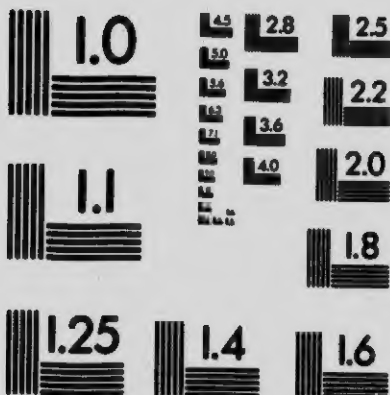


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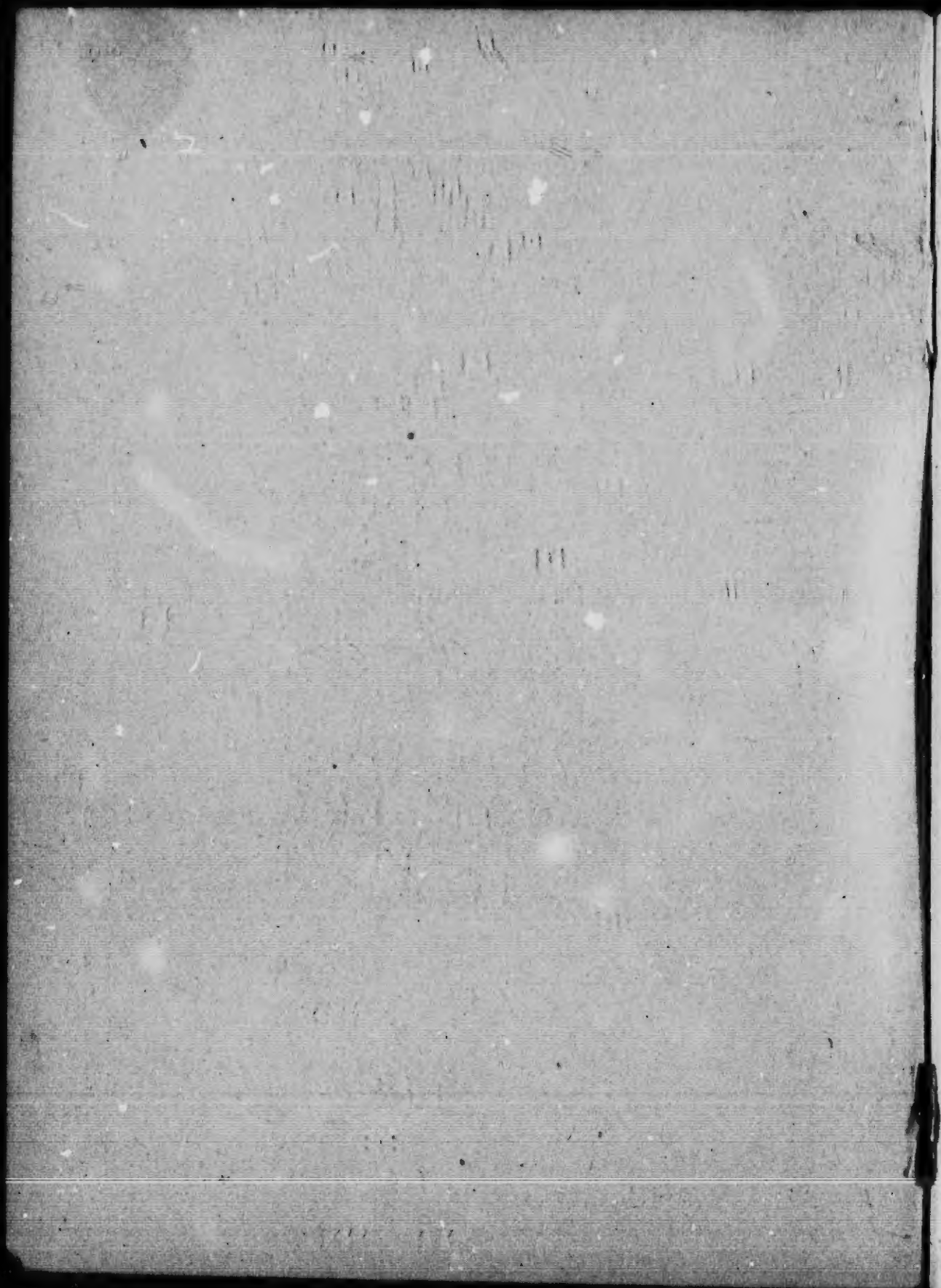
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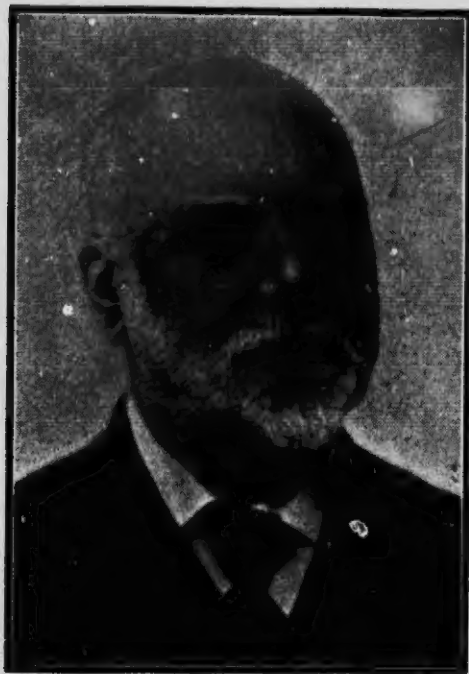
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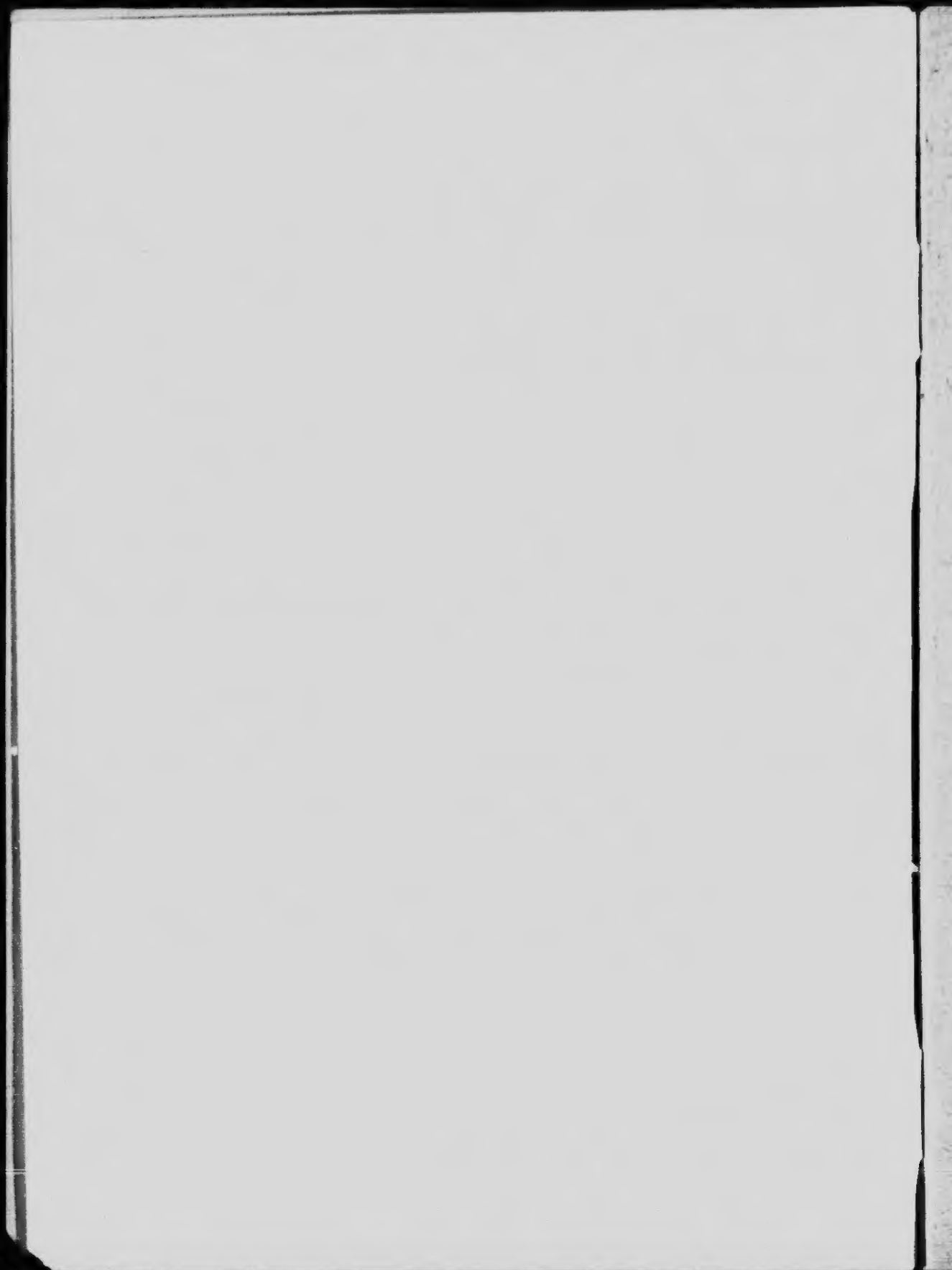
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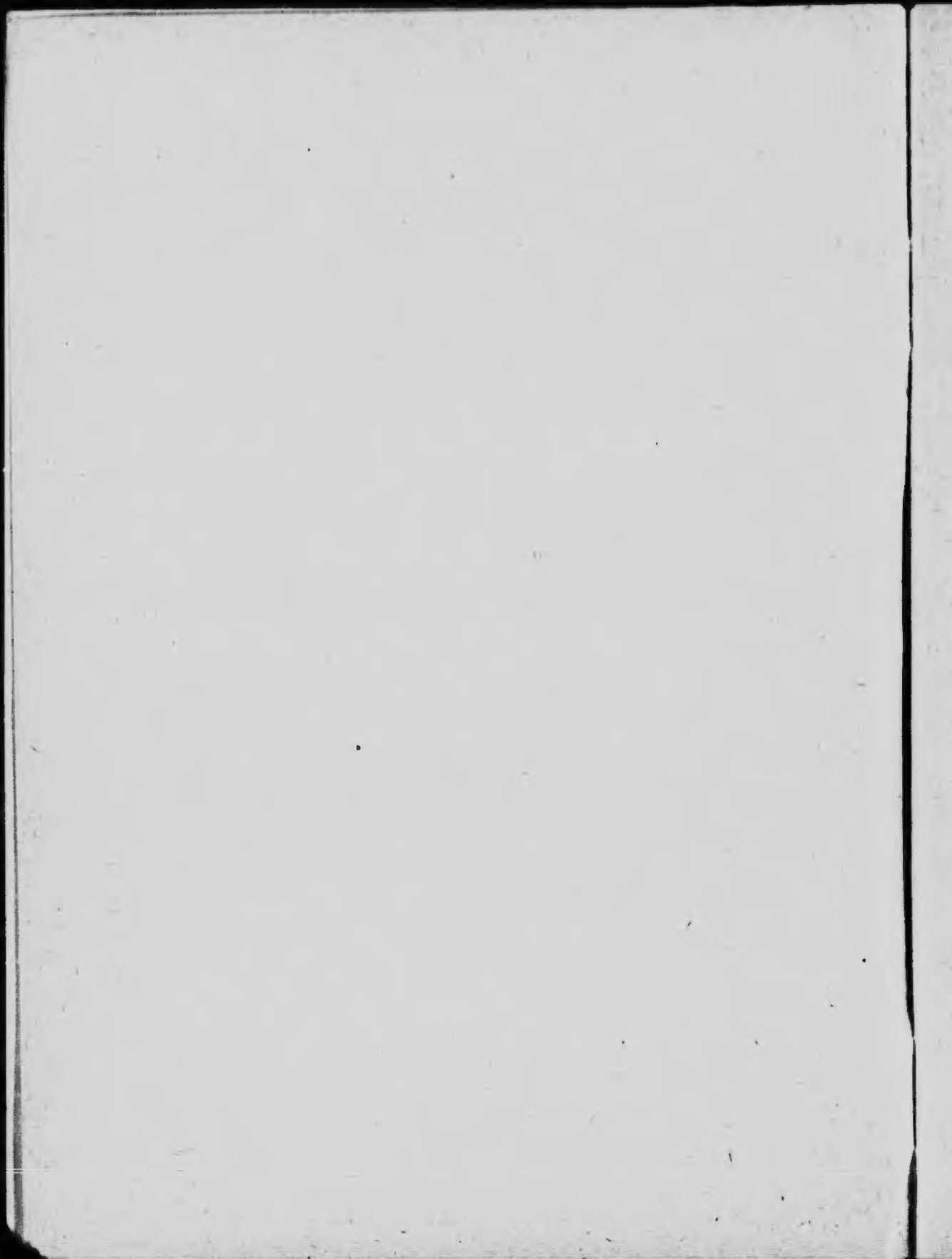


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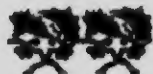
The Tragedy of Wallace

In 4 Acts.



THE TRAGEDY
OF
WALLACE

By ROBERT SELLAR

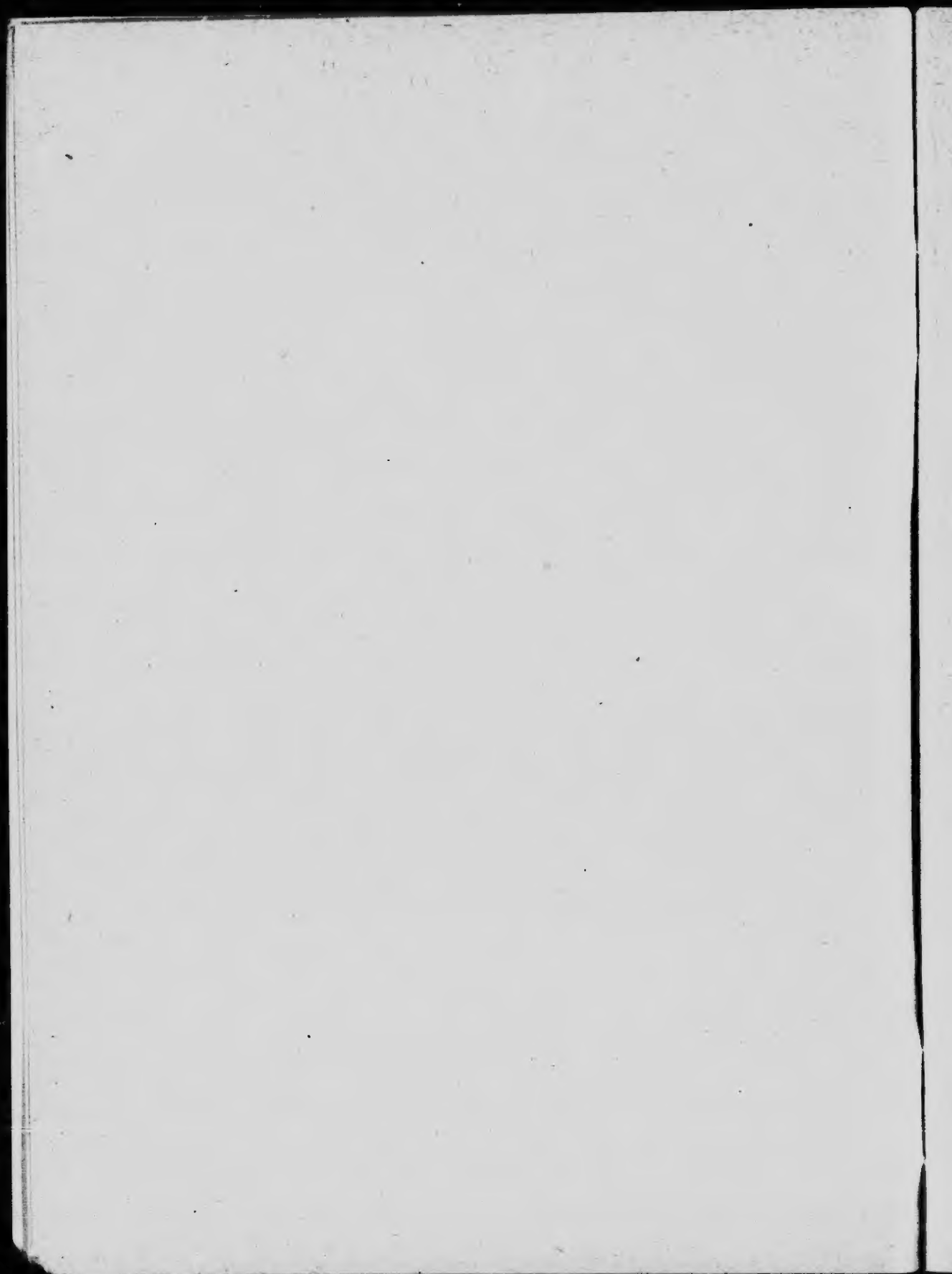


HUNTINGDON, Que.

Gleaner Book Room

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INTRODUCTION

It is well, before reading this play, to get rid of the impression that its subject is a semi-mythical personage. For this prevalent belief, the puerilities of Blind Harry's version of his life, and the stories of his exploits and prowess that linger in the Lowland localities he frequented are responsible. Discarding fabulous inventions and confining inquiries to contemporary written records, the Wallace who lived and died for Scotland emerges from the mist of myth and legend, and stands out a strong man, of rare character and ability, whose soul was possessed of one idea, the vindication of the independence of his native country. The chief documentary evidence is contained in the letters of Edward I. to his subordinates engaged in the war he was carrying on in Scotland, and their reports to him. These, together with the little that is authentic so far discovered in muniments, give solid foundation for an intelligent grasp of the conditions under which he played his part. The Wallace of tradition fades and we see a man of high resolve, a born military genius, an able administrator, with a determination to free his country, which neither privation nor disaster could weaken. It has to be kept in mind that, for nearly a year he governed his country. Burns terms him "Scotland's ill-requited Chief", and that was literally true. For nigh seven years Wallace maintained, single-handed, resistance to the plans and forces of England's greatest King, and was cut off in the prime of his manhood before he saw the fruition of his sacrifices. It is generally accepted, he was

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not forty years of age when executed. The long and vindictively minute enumeration of charges against him, in the indictment before he was sentenced, is sufficient evidence in itself of how he had been dreaded and how Edward estimated the importance of his capture.

To understand what manner of man Wallace was and what he accomplished, it is necessary to know something of the period in which he lived. The Scottish chroniclers agree in describing the reign of Alexander III. as happy. While all was going well with Scotland, the King was killed by a fall from his horse. Instantly confusion and distress ensued, owing to no fewer than ten nobles, who claimed descent from the royal family, aspiring to the vacant throne. The King of England, Edward I., swept their pretensions aside, asserting he was, according to feudal law, the successor of Alexander. His claim he founded on being lord paramount, which the Scottish parliament derided. Edward, who had just completed the conquest of Wales, resolved to add Scotland also to his Kingdom. In 1296 he crossed the Border with a large army, and, without serious difficulty, for the people were divided by the strife caused by the claimants to the crown, overran Scotland and brought it so completely into subjection that its aristocracy swore fealty to him. One man stood alone in refusing to bow the knee to Edward or acknowledge Scotland had become a part of England. That was William Wallace, who, uniting with others likeminded among the common people, started a guerilla war, begun in 1297 and kept up until his death in 1305. To hold Scotland in subjection, Edward planted strong garrisons at commanding points. To harass and capture these garrisons Wallace applied himself with a skill that equalled his daring. He was engaged in besieging the garrison at Dundee when word reached him a considerable English army was approaching to surround him. He instantly left Dundee and, by a quick march, reached the river Forth before the invaders had time to cross. A battle ensued, known as the battle of Stirling, which Wallace won, establishing his reputation as a general. He improved his victory by driving the English

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out of every nook and corner of Scotland, ending by crossing into England and ravaging the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland. At the close of the campaign he was appointed governor of Scotland until a King be chosen. Infuriated that his plans should be defeated by a man of low degree, Edward, who had been absent in France, prepared for a fresh invasion of Scotland and led it in person. Wallace successfully checked his progress and would certainly have compelled him to retreat, had his plans not been betrayed by the nobles who were jealous of him. On the 22nd July, 1298, at Falkirk, Wallace met an overwhelming defeat. Baffled, but not beaten, he retired to the woods that then overspread Scotland, and from their recesses emerged whenever opportunity offered to pounce upon the English garrisons or the castles of those Scottish nobles who had sworn fealty to Edward. Without gaining any important victory by these raids he kept the English in constant alarm and inflicted annoying losses. Driven from one position he reappeared in some unlooked for quarter. By these exploits he kept alive the spirit of independence among the common people, whose sympathy and aid enabled him to continue the unequal fight. To conquer Scotland, Edward four times visited it with large armies, winning victories that proved fruitless over an elusive and persevering foe. Wallace was relentlessly hunted without avail, until betrayed by a pretended friend. He was taken to London and executed August 23rd., 1335. Wallace was dead but the spirit of independence which he had implanted in the hearts of his countrymen by voice and example lived. Resistance to the yoke of the Edwards continued until Bannockburn vindicated Scotland's rights. The glory of Wallace lies not in his merit as a soldier but in his disinterested, unselfish character. Wealth and title he could have got by swearing fealty to Edward, but he chose poverty and privation. With him, duty to his country was supreme. Merciless in punishing deeds of cruelty and oppression he succored the weak and was open-handed to the poor. Small wonder Scotland places him first in her long roll of patriots.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Wallace.

Marion, his wife.

Graham, his friend.

Kerly, his attendant.

Moray his captain.

Douglas.

Sandy, Jen, and other inmates of the cottage.

Comyn, March and other Barons.

Bishop Wishart.

King Edward.

Bishop of London.

**Act 1. pictures the state of Scotland under the rule of the
English soldiery.**

Act 2 The Battle of Stirling.

Act 3 The plot of the Barons and the Battle of Falkirk.

Act 4 Betrayal and Death of Wallace.

ROBERT SELLAR

Huntingdon, Que., August 1, 1919.

THE TRAGEDY OF WALLACE.

ACT I.

Scene I on the banks of the Clyde near Lanark.

Marion—I never weary of this nook, with its daisied banks, the birches dipping their branches in the river, glassing the fleecy clouds, while from bush and tree comes the singing of birds. It is a peaceful scene and must be restful to you whom I am so glad to have to myself even for a day.

Wallace—I love nature in all her moods, stern or soft as this. I was not born to live in house or tower. Give me the open—these woods and those heather hills beyond them. I'd sooner hear the lark in the wild than a mouse squeak in a house. Even in this pleasant hermitage the thought will not leave me, when shall this bonny Scotland of ours be freed from the Southron?

Marion—Can you not lay aside such thoughts that we may be as in the days when you wooed me and we first sought this bower?

Wallace—I cannot forget the call of my country—it is ever with me—it possesses me day and night. So long as I can wield a sword against the invader I shall not rest.

Marion—It is a cruel task you have lifted on your shoulders. Scotland's standard has

fallen, and I love you all the more that you

Wallace—Call it not a task; it is a joyful stand forward to lift it. choice. I exult in it.

Marion—Because we women cannot share in dangers of the field, think not we would buy the peace we so dearly love at the price of Scotland's shame. We are as leal to our native land as are her sons. No, Wallace, though I wish we could live in domestic bliss in a house, however humble, of our own, so long as the Southron seeks to rob us of our land, I would have you give him battle.

Wallace—Thou art a true soldier's wife. Women like you give vim to our blows. Remember, I may be killed.

Marion—I do not forget. Should you fall, I'll wash the bloody wound that took your life with my tears, and smile exultant I had a husband who dared all for Scotland.

Wallace—Women compared with men are weaker in body but stronger in spirit, and have a gift of patient endurance we lack. Think not of death but of victory and the happy days we shall have when Peace comes to our loved country.

Enter Kerly.

Wallace—What word?

Kerly — Fenwick's convoy has been sighted on the Carlisle road.

Wallace—Is the guard strong?

Kerly—Yes, both horse and foot.

Wallace—Send word back to Graham I will be with him before the sun touches Tintock top and to all our lads to join me.

Exit Kerly

Marion—This is sudden

Wallace—It is a call in which my soul rejoices. Fenwick must not reach Ayr with supplies for Hazlerig.

Marion—The party may be too large for you to face.

Wallace—Do not say face. I'd face Edward and his hosts. I have not so learned the soldier's trade not to know skill can match numbers. I shall deal warily with Fenwick. It is by raids and sudden attacks our fight has to be kept up until the day comes when Scotland awakes and in her strength meets the English in the open. That is the day I long for.

Marion—The woman in me wishes you to stay but duty tells me to cheer you forth and use my wifely skill to prepare you for the morrow. Life does not count in years alone. I'd rather it should count in moments such as this. I had rather share in the purpose of your soul than have spun and served tables until my hair grew white with a husband of meaner mold. Go and fight for Scotland! If you come not back, the memory of what you have done will console me.

Wallace—The craving of my soul was found in you. I felt a lack of something, I know not what: in you was given me by

heaven. My first and only love went forth to you and it is as undying as the hills. The Southron may take my life but he cannot rob you of my love—it will survive for, like all true love, it is deathless and lives on in the Hereafter. Let us go.

(Exeunt)

Scene II, Interior of a cottage, Jen sitting by the fire spinning and singing "I sit on my crecpie and spin at my wheel."

Jen—The guidman is late. Nae help maks the day's darg lang in casting peat. Eh, but he has been a guid man to me and mine. When he cam a courting he was bauld and supple. Nae tichter lad followed the laird when he shouted "To horse." He had a cheery lauch an fond o' a joke. Thae were the happy days—nae Englishry to worry and harry puir auld Scotlan, but ilka a man sitting couthie by his ain fire side. Here he comes.

Enter Sandy.

Jen—Hae ye got done?

Sandy—All I'll dae until we hear frae Ayr. Mair sogers I'm tauld, have cam frae the South. There's nae use castin peats for the English to warm themsels.

Jen—Ne'er fash yer thoom aboot them. We bide secure on this hillside, an gin they did find us oot ye hae got ready a refuge in the
CAVE.

Sandy—It's ower bad we canna live oot our time in peace, for we are happy and content.

Jen—I'm glad to hear you say that.

Sandy—Wha wadna be happy wi you? I've had to thole mickle in wrastlin wi the warl but ye aye had for me rest and joy in our but-and-ben.

Jen—Oh, Sandy. I wish I could dae mair for ye, for you hae been a bield an help that never failed me.—What keeps the lassies? The shearin must be done.

Sandy—(Goes to the door). I hear them lilting the auld sang—"Ca the ewes to the knowes."

Jen—Aweel, we'll hae supper noo.

Enter Maisie, Eppie, and a young man.

Jen—An wha may this be?

Maisie—Oo, this is a neebor lad on his wye hame ower the hill.

Sandy—An what may yer name be?

Kerly—Jock Kerly.

Sandy—Ony word frae Ayr?

Kerly—Naething ava.

Sandy—While the lassies are fillin the coggies, Jock, will ye gie us a sang?

Sings, "The Kail brose o' auld Scotlan."

Jen—Sit doon, we are a' ready.

(As they are about leaving the table, supper bein' over, the door is thrown open and a boy bounds in.)

Boy—Ther's half a dizzin or mair English sogers ridin ower the mair. Hide afore they come!

Sandy—Haul a dizzin! We can fecht that many.

Boy—No, ye canna. Ane is in armor and has a lance.

Sandy—Guid wife, flee along wi the lassies to the cave; Jock an I will bide to gie ye time to get in.

(The women leave.)

Sandy—I can see them noo, a knight wi three followers. Surely we can hannel them. Jock? (Looks round.) Hoo! he's gone. He didna look feart. I'll stay. I'm no gaun to leave my hoose to be harried.

(Shuts the door and bars it.)

Knight arrives, thrusts his lance at the door and walks in.

Sandy—There's nae by your leeve. There was a time when a body's hoose was his castle.

Knight—(To soldier) What is the vulgar churl saying?

Soldier—He likes not our entering.

Knight—He will like less our errand. Have you found the girls? Nowhere to be seen. eh? (Speaking to Sandy.) Fellow, where are your daughters? We saw them make for the house along with a ma.

Sandy—What's you, wull?

Knight—Answer or I shall make you tell.

Sandy—That's ayont you.

Knight—Fell and bind him.
smashing of interior an' Struggle, ending in
Sandy's being overcome.)

Knight—Now, tell me where are your daughters?

Sandy—You Southron deevil, what richt hae ye to enter my hoose, smash its plenishing and bind me like a thief for the gallows? I'm a free Scot an defy ye.

Knight—Answer what I asked.

Sandy—You can kill me but I'll no tell.

Knight—Thou shalt be killed if you do not tell where your girls are hiding.

Sandy—Ye hae nae richt to ask. Loose ma arms an I will fecht the fowr o' ye, ane at a time.

(Soldier tries to gag Sandy, who kicks out and fells him.)

Soldier—If I stab him you will have no answer. Let me put a hot peat to his feet.

(Knight nods assent.)

(Soldiers pull off Sandy's boots, one ready with a shovel of hot coals to put to his feet. Wallace rushes in with attendants. A fight ensues, in which the Knight and soldiers are overcome.)

Sandy—(released goes to the Knight)
Wha's prisoner noo? Wad ye like a hot peat to warm yer taes?

Wallace—Touch him not; he is of use as a hostage. (Addresses the Knight) What mean you by this outrage? Are unoffending peasants to be prey for England's Knights?

Knight—They are rebels to my sovereign and I treat them as rebels deserve.

Wallace—They are not rebels, for they owe no allegiance to your King. You are where you have no right to be, intruders, robbers and murderers.

Knight—I scorn to argue with a low born cateran.

Wallace—I have no badge of Knighthood but I am a man in whom God has implanted hatred of injustice, and I am, what you are not, a slave to a cruel King and to your evil passions. (Speaks to his followers) Take them to our trysting place. (To Sandy) Good man, you may thank Jock Kerly you have not roasted feet, for it was he who called us.

Sandy—Thankful is no word for what I feel. The blessing of an auld man be on you. You can be none else than Wallace, Scotland's hope in this dark hour. May you deliver her as you have delivered me.

(Exit

Wallace—Amen. 'Tis a pious wish. Hark! What is that?

(Sound of bagpipes)

Enter Graham with attendants.

Wallace—Why sounding the coronach?

Graham—With sad hearts we bring woeful tidings.

Wallace—Evil or good we must hear them. Which of our hands has been defeated?

Graham—None; worse than that.

Wallace—Tell me at once, for evil news grows not less by being holden.

Graham—I cannot bear to speak the word that will tear your heart.

Wallace—Is it of Marion?

Graham—It is—she is dead.

Wallace—My God!—Tell me all.

Graham—Enraged by your exploit in capturing Fenwick's convoy, Hazlerig had your wife arrested. Brought before him he demanded with loud voice and threatening gesture, she tell where you were to be found. Steadfastly refusing to betray you, anger overcame him, and he signed to a soldier to thrust his sword into her bosom.—Our men await your command to avenge her.

Wallace—Would the blood of every Englishman in Scotland restore her to these arms? Would her pure spirit be appeased by sending a hundred Hazlerigs to hell? Leave me alone.

(Exeunt all)

Wallace—Can it be that she I clasped to my heart the other day is dead? Things gross have life, but she, the very spirit of all that is pure, has not a breath. It maddens me. I cannot fit the dread truth into my life.—I was the cause. Had I not crossed her path she would be moving now in her beauty, the joy of all beholding her. Why did she spare me? Why not tell the governor? Ah, thou true heart, more faithful to me than I to you.—Vengeance will no more ease me than please

thee. Vengeance on whom? On the poor tool of a bloody master? Search out the source of all that afflicts my country and each woe finds its centre in Edward. In the battle the archer singles out him who is leader, and so aims his shaft. No vengeance on Hazelrig and his crew can free Scotland, naught less than dragging the usurper to his doom. (Kneels and raises his sword.) Before high Heaven and my sainted Marion, I swear henceforth I shall have one aim, to tear from Scotland's throne the foul usurper.

Enter Graham.

Graham—The men are ready for the march to Ayr.

Wallace—I care not to go.

Graham—Rouse thee from thy sorrow. Action will soften remembrance.

Wallace—Not today. Tomorrow or some other morrow I shall execute what Justice, not Vengeance, demands for, by signal act, the English must be taught to reverence Scotland's womanhood.

Graham—The men cannot understand your mood. They so burn to take Hazlerig and his men red-handed that no odds would daunt them.

Wallace—All the currents of my heart stand still. One thought fills my brain. one vision floats before my eyes—I see Marion in her gracious loveliness; her winning smile haunts me. This day I would be alone

to roam the woods. I seem still to hear her voice.

(Exit Graham)

ACT II.

Scene I, A hill-side on the Forth.

Graham and Douglas.

Graham—You look dour this morning; does not that wide-spread array of Southrons give you joy?

Douglas—I am thinking of the hour when I shall be hacking at them.

Graham—They are more than I counted on, but we can face them, for our army is no mean one. A year ago oft we could not get enough men for a raid; now they flock to our standard of their own will.

Douglas—It is the name and fame of Wallace that draws them.

Graham—Yet in numbers we are not a match for that host.

Douglas—Victory does not ever go with numbers—strategy and spirit count for more.

Graham—In Wallace we have a match for the best of Edward's captains. If wit can do it, he will trap them.

Enter Wallace with Moray.

Wallace—A cheering sight. I long wished

for the time when we could face the enemy in the open field. That hour has come, and before the sun sets our lads will sup in yonder camp.

Enter a Soldier.

Soldier—Two monks from the English camp would have speech with thee.

Wallace—Bring them hither.

Enter two Monks.

First Monk—Our noble commander, having pity on your souls, would spare you. He is ready to grant you terms.

Wallace—There are two commanders of your host. For which do you speak?

Second Monk—We speak for both.

First Monk—Our Bishop, as becomes his holy calling, desires not to shed blood, and has given us authority to say, if you will lay down your arms and promise dutiful allegiance to your sovereign King, you will all be given his grace.

Wallace—Come you to insult us by speaking of our sovereign King? Go back and tell that hypocrite who wears the garb of holy church and the proud Earl Surrey we are not here to talk of peace but to right Scotland's wrongs. Go back, and tell your masters to come on, we will face them to their beards.

Exit Monks

Wallace—The fight is on and I would you know, my trusted lieutenants, my plan of battle. See that wooden bridge that Stirling castle over-shadows: over that the enemy has

decided to march. We will withdraw, so far as we can, our men from their view. Seeing few of us they will boldly crowd across that bridge and form on this bank preparing for their advance. Not until enough have crossed to be fit measure for our swords will I give the signal to leave concealment and rush upon them.

Graham—Will they not rather seek to reach us by the ford? That bridge is narrow.

Wallace—I have sure word the bridge is their intent. A trusted spy overheard the leaders in dispute. Surrey said, "We will cross by the ford;" the bishop said, "Cross by the bridge, it is the nighest way to victory." The soldier pointed to the risk from the narrowness of the bridge, but the priest declared the Scots were so weak in men, so poorly equipped, and so awed by the largeness of Edward's army, they would flee when the first column, crossing by the bridge, advanced to attack them. Surrey would not yield him. when the haughty churchman ended the controversy by shouting he would prove his opinion true by taking the lead in crossing the bridge. Now go, get your men under cover of the woods that lie behind the crest of this hill, and await the blast of my horn, when you will rush down the sloping bank upon the unwitting foe.

Exit all except Wallace and Moray.

Wallace—What day of our Lord is this?

Moray—September 11, 1297.

Wallace—It shall be a day Scotland will remember. See you, Moray, the Southrons begin to move, and head for the bridge.

Enter Graham.

Graham—All is ready, the men await your signal.

Wallace—Order them to make no move or sound. I stay here to time the moment for attack. See how the Southrons crowd the bridge.

Exit Graham

Moray—There is now a host of English on the south bank.

Wallace—Not yet, there must be enough of them to make sure their rout will decide the day. You will hold the reserve, as caution should at any part help be needed.

Enter Several Officers

Douglas—We have come to watch: this Crossing of the bridge is slow. I make out in the throng Cressingham by the gold cross that shines on his corselet. If he escape my axe call me not Douglas.

Graham—I'd say half have crossed.

Wallace—Patience, the more the merrier. I will speak to our men.

Exit Wallace and Graham.

Scene II, The Scottish army.

Graham—You see they are ready and await your word.

Wallace—Comrades, I have brought the English to you and it is now yours to make them dance. You are not like them. They are serfs, slaves to those Norman barons, you are freemen, holding your lands by simple fee, owing no service, crouching to no noble. They have no heart in the fight, being pricked to it by the lances of their lords. You have come hither of your free will to defend all you hold dear. You face vassals, brought from their own country to rob you of yours. Have your children lacked food, there are the men who stole their portion. Have your homes been burned? Behold the men who did it, the thieves who fed your corn to their horses and drove your families to find shelter in the woods. They have not a glimmer of excuse to be here: you gave them no offence, yet they have come to rob you of the land of your birth. (Stamps his foot on the ground.) This soil is ours, that river, those hills, it was God who gave them to you. Will you fight to hold what is your very own, or yield it to the English King? (Shouts "We will fight.") Fight! what else can true Scots do? Die, rather than give up all you hold dear. Obey your captains, and I make you siccar before the sun gains his height you will be chasing the English loons. Who among you would go home to tell wife and neighbors he was beaten? Not one. Then swear wi' me, by the God who made us, we will drive the Southrons into the Forth or perish in the attempt. Follow me, rush down

this brae and strike for Scotland and your rights! (Sound his bugle and all rush forward.)

Scene 3

Moray—I hold the reserve, but as well might hold a leash of hounds when the stag is sighted. I see Douglas hewing his way to reach the hated Cressingham. Would I were with him! Look at Wallace swinging his two-handed sword as it were a flail. None dare attack him, not even that Knight in armor. Before the rush of our spearmen the Southrons fly, the bridge is choked, they are falling in the river. There is no need for a reserve—the day is won! Come my lads, we will have a hand in the finish. (Exit.

Enter Graham.

Graham—(To a soldier) Where is Wallace?

Soldier—Look, see him leading the charge on the English camp. Oh, he is the brave leader! Asks no soldier to go but leads him on. (Exit

Enter Wallace with soldiers

Wallace—Thanks to you, Heaven has given us a glorious victory.

A Soldier—And thanks to the noble Wallace who led us.

Wallace—Say not so. You, captains, keep watch and ward tonight, tomorrow we attack the castle.

ACT IV.

Scene I, Room in Linlithgow Peel Tower.

Seated at a table—Lord Comyn, The Steward, Bishop Wishart, Earls Dunbar, Lennox, Angus and March.

Comyn—We have met to decide what we shall do. King Edward is within two days' march. Shall we, representing Scotland's nobility, make our peace with him or join the camp of the upstart Wallace, who, for nigh a year has pretended to rule Scotland as regent?

March—A mocking choice! Follow the son of a bonnet laird I shall not.

Dunbar—Edward is an anointed King and I go with him. For those who do him service he has both nonors and lands.

Wishart—Ay, and gold too. The choice is between poverty and plenty. This young man Wallace presumes too much. For his misdeeds he has to account to Holy Church.

Lennox—We would soil our Knighthood by supporting a common fellow such as this Wallace. I will be commanded by a King, but not by a landless henchman.

March—I have assurance under his own hand, that King Edward respects our claims, and places us on the same footing as his own Barons. This talk of Scotland's freedom is mere smoke that darkens the land. The freedom meant would be the doom of our ancient nobility. Let us shake off the glamor that blinds so many and be true to ourselves.

Angus—What of the people? They may turn on us, for they worship Wallace.

March—The people! The vile scum will turn against him on his first defeat. We need the aid of King Edward to teach them their proper place.

The Steward—That is true. My vassals refuse to work my demesne. If we allow them to get Wallace's notion of freedom into their heads, we may forget our nobility and go to Flanders to beg the English to be their spearmen.

March—That is the experience of us all. Look at the English earls, how rich they are and powerful, because they hold their vassals as serfs and make them work at their bidding. Is it agreed, then, we make a pact with King Edward?

Lennox—What can we do otherwise?

Enter Servant.

Servant—Wallace is at the gate.

Wishart—Speak of the devil and he appears.

Comyn—Show him hither.

(Enter Wallace)

Wallace Noble lords, my duty to you. I have sure word the English army is nigh, and come to ask your help.

Lennox—What claim have you to our help?

Wallace—As you well know, my lord, at the Forest Kirk I was chosen against my will

Guardian of Scotland. Until she has a rightful King it falls on me to look to the defence of our country. Would it were some one more fit!

Lennox—You say well, one more fit. Your routing an army led by a priest is no warrant of your ability to cope with England's greatest soldier.

Comyn—How dare you count on our soiling our nobility by going under your command?

Wallace—'Tis not I that calls you. It is Scotland. Is she to crouch under the Southron yoke? Think not of Wallace and his humble origin, his lack of years, but have regard to your duty to Scotland, that is mother of us all.

Wishart—How dare you preach to us of our duty?

Wallace—He who loves his country more than gold does not need to be told his duty.

Angus—He has you there, my lord bishop.

Wallace—My lords, say you will relieve me of my task, appoint a leader from among yourselves, and I will become his willing follower. In the coming battle Scotland's destiny will be at stake. What are rank and title compared with her weal?

March—If we comply, what would your ragged army do?

Wallace—They would join in the fight. In the heart of the meanest beats the spirit of independence. They have gathered to fight the invader and fight they shall.

Lennox—The beggars have nothing to lose; they have come hoping for spoil like that which followed Cressingham's blunder.

Wallace—They risk their all. The poorest of them would not sell his birthright for gold, title, or power.

Comyn—Withdraw; you broke in on our conference.

Wallace—Bear with me before I obey your order. Go to the top of this castle and you will espy advance parties of Edward's army, the mightiest that ever crossed the Border. What is the purpose of that great host? It is to conquer Scotland. Edward has made Wales part of England and he now comes to add our country. Shall that be? Shall our native land, that compelled the Romans to retreat and drove back the Danes, fall before the haughty King of England and sink to be a mere appanage of his realm? Never, may Heaven grant me death rather than I should live to see the degradation of my country. Are you going to lie down before the Southron and call him master? The stag turns to fight its pursuers, even the doe will defend her fawn against the hounds, and will not you face the invader and strike the blow needed to save our homes? You have the power, a united Scotland can send this advancing host backward to their own country in disgrace. Will you not do so?

Wishart—Keep your drivel for you. beggarly army and see if it will feed and clothe them.

March—We are not to be taught by you what we should do.

Comyn—Withdraw, you interrupt our consultation.

Wallace—I go, but remember this, if, in the coming battle, you do not haste to our help, the name of Scotland's nobility will stink in the nostrils of every true Scot.

(Exit.

Lennox—It is a relief to be rid of the impudent fellow who dares dictate to his superiors.

March—He has made our course clear—to unite with him is impossible. If the Lord Bishop of Glasgow will consent, we will communicate through him with King Edward offering him our services.

Wishart—I can go to the English camp without suspicion, saying I have come to visit my brother in God, the Bishop of Durham.

Lennox—I believe in policy. It would not be wise to offend all who are on the side of Wallace, for there are men whom it is not prudent to offend. I suggest, we keep up appearances to the last—that we call out our retainers and come on the field a stout body of horsemen. Then standing apart, look on the fray. When it becomes plain the King is winning as he must, let the Steward give a signal, when we shall ride away.

March—And leave Wallace and his rabble army to be dealt with by the English. Good

Comyn—Are you all agreed?

All—Agreed.

Scene II, A hillside in Carron Vale, near Falkirk.

Wallace—The day has come that will test us all. My fears are of those Barons. All at once they have changed and yesterday were so sweet to my face that I suspect they have planned some trap for me. If they have, I am lost, for without their help I fail.

Enter Graham.

Wallace—What of the enemy?

Graham—When the mist thins you will see them, for they are near.

Wallace—Do their numbers equal reports?

Graham—They are a vast host. I could not spy the end of their squadron of horse.

Wallace—Strong where we are weak. I have planned a new device to stem the charges of their cavalry which may surprise Edward. Ha, the mist lifts! What a brave showing of Knights in armor the sun reveals! Mark that group of Knights, all glittering in steel and gilt, with plenitude of penants and banners.

Graham—That is the squadron of Bek, Bishop of Durham. Out of his own wealth he has equipped them. What can our poor footmen do against such horsemen? I fear the clash.

Wallace—Fear is no word for a soldier. There is marshalled the pride and strength of England. They have marched for weeks to reach us and expect to trample us in the mire. These be Scotland's foes and my sword-arm stiffens and my heart throbs with joy at the prospect of battle. Fear not, my comrade, our

cause is good and we shall play the man. The royal banner over that tent to the right tells where Edward is. Hark, that blast of trumpets is the warning to get ready. Turn now and see how our spearmen are set to meet the charges of the English horse. See those four circles on the hillside. The first row sit on their heels, holding their spears breast-high of a horse; the second line pointing their spears somewhat higher; the third line stands, ready to make a thrust at horse and rider. Will not the sight of those circles bristling with spears make the bravest of England's horsemen pause before he dashes on them? Inside each circle are archers who will search for openings in their armor, and should, by any chance, a Knight break through there are axmen ready to crash blows on his head. What think you of my device?

Graham—To me it is new and marvellous.

Wallace—I count on these four woods of spears, those four huge porcupines, checking the onrush of the English horse, and when they are brought to the halt and confused, our cavalry will fall upon and rout them.

Graham—You are counting too much on the Barons, whom I see assembling in front of yonder wood. A messenger comes from them to greet you.

Wallace—Should they fail us we are lost. Our spearmen will not flinch but needs must be aided by horse.

Scene III, Another part of the Battlefield.

Wallace—Steady, my bonny Scots. The English horse will try to ride you down. Grip your spears tighter and give them choice of wheeling or having their horses' breasts go by your spears. They cannot break your line.—Here they come, their trumpets sound the charge.—The riders shout "St. George and Merry England!" Hold fast, shout in return, "Scotland for Ever."

Graham—I never saw so grand a sight. The earth trembles beneath their horses' feet and fill the air with rolling thunder.

Wallace—Pride has a fall. Not looking before them they are caught in the bog—they are in disorder. You Ettrick men shoot true; they are your quarry—struggling out, they form again and gallop upon us. Ha! their horses balk at our bristling spears, and throw their riders. Knights pass on to seek an opening in the other schiltrons—they do not find one—their officers are staggered by our device of a wood of spears—they ride back to report.

Graham—Think you we have won?

Wallace—Not yet. Here comes the reply. See that long line of bowmen appearing from the rear. Is there no end to them! They outnumber our archers four to one—yea ten to one. Edward has remodelled his army and turned half his spearmen into archers. This

charge amazes me! I counted on hundreds of bowmen not on thousands. This disconcerts me, may defeat my plans. There comes the trial arrow to find our distance. Great heavens, arrows come as thick as hail at Candlemas. Our massed spearmen are an easy mark and fall as trees before the blast. Graham, haste to our horse and bid them fall on these archers. Unless they make a diversion we are lost. We are stalked like deer caught in a thicket.

(Exit Graham)

Graham returns with an arrow in his side.

Graham—We are betrayed—the horse are a mile away—the Barons have deserted us.

Wallace—Merciful God, save my country! What of yourself? You have been hit.

Graham—Do not heed me.

Wallace—I will pluck the arrow.

Graham—Touch it not—it is barbed—I bleed to death.

(Sinks and dies.)

Wallace—Alas, my best brother, my true friend, tested when hardest tried. Would you had died in the hour of victory!—Comrades, we are betrayed, the horse have gone over to the enemy. Treachery has blasted our arms. Kerly, take this shield to cover your head and go to the captains of the other schiltrons with the order to break their formation and find shelter in the nighest wood. Spearmen, go and seek cover, but you bowmen stay with me to hold the enemy. Our turn will come another

day. (Snatches up a bow.) Bend your bows till they are like to crack and make sure aim. So—(shoots.) That arrow found its mark in the head of the English captain.

A Soldier to Wallace—My sheaf is empty.

Wallace—Pick up the English arrows and send them back. Stand to it, my Scotties, for we must hold the Southrons a little longer; they came to conquer Scotland, we will give them graves in it. See that officer leading a file to yonder knoll. Give them a shower. Well done, laddies, we are not to be beaten. They weaken. A score of horse could now throw them into disorder.

Gordon—Had I two score of my clansmen I would charge them.

Enter Kerly.

Kerly—The last of the schiltrons are near cover.

Wallace to his men—Our work is done here. Fall back slowly, firing as you go. Ha! horsemen are coming to chase us; stand and give them a parting shower. That has checked them. (They reach the forest.) We have been beaten but not routed; beaten not in fair fight, but by treachery.

Scene IV, Wall of Stirling Castle.

Wallace to attendant—Go, and when the captains come lead them hither. Is Scotland doomed to be Edward's slave? I counted this morning on the joy of victory: instead, I drink the cup of defeat. The thought mad

dens me. Scotland's nobility are not noble. With titles and lands Edward has bought them and they sold the battle to him and left their countrymen to the Southron sword. Fifty horsemen would have thrown the deer-jerkined bowmen into disorder and saved the day. The titled cowards trotted off the field and left us to the enemy. An open foe I can face, but the coward who speaks fair while getting ready to drive his dagger into my back, I cannot foil. Curses on the Barons who have sold Scotland! They are not Scots; they are the spawn of the degenerate Frenchmen who were forced upon us. There are chivalrous French, they of romance and story, but these are not of them. They are descendants of Normans, who have no honor; proud and cruel and false. They add to their titles the name of the estates they took from the people.

Enter Captains.

Brothers, we did all men could do. Rats in shape of Knights, stole victory when within our reach. It is a sad day for Scotland, for we cannot replace our comrades who lie on yonder hillside and a vengeful enemy will soon be on our track.

First Captain—We can gather enough men to make a stand.

Wallace—With the numbers against us that would be of no avail. The English are compelled to await the coming of supplies by sea. When they get them they will overflow the land as the Forth does when in spate. We

must disperse, watching for straggling parties. Be this your motto, maintain resistance to the invader until Time brings us opportunity to meet him in the field. Though Edward has got the aristocrats on his side, he has not got Scotland. Her freeholders are not to be bought. The spark of Freedom has been lit in the hearts of the common people and to the Southron yoke they will never bend their necks.

Second Captain—Ought we not to seek help from France?

Wallace—No! Scotland's sons shall alone win her freedom. A people who cannot achieve their independence by their own arms prove they are unfit for the glorious gift. Yestreen that sun shone on a hopeful people, looking for a restoration of the days of good King Alexander. Their hopes have been blasted, not by the arms of Edward but by his buying a lot of titled cowards.

First Captain—So each of us is to find a safe retreat.

Gordon—Beyond those hills are ten thousand Highlanders who would join us, and not a traitor among them.

Wallace—We must stay in the Lowlands. The eagle makes his nest where his quarry is to be found. Go, search out the safest nook you can find and, watching from your place of retreat, strike the enemy—give him no rest. Farewell, my brothers, when we leave this castle it will be set on fire, so that Edward will

find bare walls of blackened stones. I go to lead my own men to the forests of Clydesdale.

First Captain—For our and Scotland's sake expose not your life rashly. If you fall in raid or skirmish, we are undone.

Wallace—Not so, while lives a Scot resolved his country shall be free. Scotland is as unconquerable as her hills. Her fate lies not with me but her people. Again, farewell.

Scene I, A Forest in Clydesdale.

Mentieth—Somewhere in this wood is Wallace, hunted like a fox, yet defying a hundred searchers. Would it not be a kindness to end the wretched life he is leading? His hopes have been blasted, so that it is certain he can accomplish nothing to change Scotland's destiny. Like a summer-cloud he overspread us, and like a cloud his fame has melted. He is now merely a disturber of the country's peace. Edward has won, and his grip cannot be loosened. Submission means peace and prosperity to a distracted land. These forays by Wallace accomplish naught but evil. Is it not a patriotic duty to end his useless resistance? Shall I not render Scotland a service by bringing his hurtful career to a close? King Edward desires our good. His aims and plans are beyond the grasp of the common ruck, for instead of being her enemy, he is Scotland's best friend in seeking to make her part of a great nation. This letter of his to me is insistent, Wallace is the only disturber

of Scotland's quiet and must be put down. End Wallace and I do the King the service he desires and which he will richly reward. Why should I not do this service to the King to whom I have sworn fealty and whose bread I eat? If I do not obey him, somebody else will and get the reward which I so much need. Wallace is doomed—he will be caught, that is certain, therefore why should I not profit by what is sure to happen? To be taken by another will not advantage Wallace, while to me it would lose the money I sorely need. I shall do what the King orders.

Scene II, Another part of the Forest.

Wallace—I am hunted as if I were a mad wolf which bites whatever he sees. No cave so deep, no forest so thick hides me from my pursuers more than a day. Each hour I hear blood-hounds on my track and spies multiply. All the influence and wealth Edward has at command is put forth for my capture. A price is set upon this poor head, but so long as it tenants my brain it shall plan to thwart the tyrant. His unrelenting rage is proof I have still power in maintaining Scotland's cause. Were it not so, he would stop this hounding of a broken man. So be it. While I can draw the sword Edward cannot boast Scotland has yielded.—Some one comes. He is alone; I will face him. (*Enter Mentieth.*) It is you, I once knew you as a friend.

Mentieth—I am still, though you seem to

doubt it. Yesterday I met a company of soldiers who told me you had been seen in the forest north of the Clyde.

Wallace—Sought me to tell them where they could find me?

Mentieth—I am no traitor. Hearing you were so near my poor abode and, knowing the distressful life you endure, I, out of old friendship, have sought you that you may rest in comfort for a night.

Wallace—We were companions once against the Southron; you fell away. Bitter experience makes me doubt all I meet.

Mentieth—Why distrust me in offering a night's hospitality, when the doing; so, if it came to English ears, would cost my head?

Wallace—Enough, I will follow you.

Scene III, A room in Mentieth's tower.

Enter Mentieth with four of his servants.

Menteith—From you, my long and well tried followers, I want an urgent service. Wallace has come to hide here a while. It means gold and land to each of you that he go not forth again.

Servant—Are we to kill him?

Mentieth—No, no! I ask you to commit no murder. Simply to help me to take him prisoner, when the troop of English horse near by shall carry him away.

Servant—We are not able; his strength is that of a giant.

Mentieth—Fear not, I shall help and we will be five to one. I shall have shackles to

slip on his arms so he cannot use them. You would like to have farms of your own. I shall give you land and money to buy cattle. Do this service for me, and you shall have farms and a gold piece to each of you. A brief struggle with this man and you are made for life. Think of your families and throw not this chance away.

(The servants whisper together.)

Servant—We would not kill him, but are willing to make him prisoner.

Mentieth—Good! my plan is this. I will sit down to dinner with Wallace alone, and you shall wait upon us. The signal for your onset shall be when I turn the loaf upside down.

Servant—We will do it.

Scene IV, Another room with dinner on the table.

Mentieth—It is soldier's fare—abundant and a welcome with each platter.

Wallace—Where is your good lady and children?

Menteith—I wanted no loose tongues as to your presence beneath my humble roof. They have gone on a visit to her uncle's castle. We are alone, save these servitors.

Wallace—How near are the English soldiers?

Mentieth—Four miles. You are secure. Lay aside your arms and let us enjoy the evening recalling old times.

Wallace—Rest, even for a brief space is welcome.

(The servants having spread the table stand behind Wallace.)

Mentieth—Is it not time peace came to our distracted country? It makes my heart bleed when I think of good Alexander's reign and times.

contrast it with these confused and bloody

Wallace—I agree, but say better those times of trial to slavery. My sword shall not know its sheath until Scotland is free.

Menteith—You know not what is before you. (Turns the loaf, when all five spring upon Wallace, who, after desperate resistance, is shackled.)

Menteith—I am winded—Harry, take a brand from the hearth and wave it out of the window. 'Tis the signal to the English captain.

Enter a body of English soldiers.

Menteith—Captain, this is your prisoner. Take him away quickly. (Aside, I cannot bear to look on him.)

Wallace—(As he is borne out by the soldiers.)—*Mentieth*, under the guise of hospitality you have betrayed me. While Scotland endures, your name shall be linked with that of Judas Iscariot.

Scene V, Fenchurch St., London.

First Citizen—Will you tell me why this crowd?

Second Citizen—Waiting to see the great Scots rebel, whom the soldiers call the Wicked Wallace.

First Citizen—I know not aught of him

Second Citizen—Why, he is the man who, after Scotland was conquered, kept up the fight.

First Citizen—A desperate villain. I warrant you.

Second Citizen—Till he was caught there could be no peace, so the King did search him out.

First Citizen—What a throng! See the horsemen are clearing a way for the sheriff. He must be coming.

Second Citizen—Now I can see him, calm and defiant.

First Citizen—A proper man, bears himself like a king for all his chains.

Second Citizen—He needs to be well fettered. Did you ever see such arms and shoulders?

Scene VI, a Dungeon.

Warder—(To Wallace asleep on the floor.) Wake up: the Bishop has come to see you.

Enter the Bishop of London.

Bishop—I bring the consolations of Holy Church, ever mindful of those about to die.

Wallace—I take them not from your hands; they are stained with the blood of my country.

Bishop—What mean you?

Wallace—For seven years have you not abetted Edward in his attacks on Scotland;

raised money for him, enlisted men for his armies? Did not a Bishop head the attack at Stirling? Did not Bishop Bek head another at Falkirk? Who was it arrogated the right to bestow the crown of Scotland on whom-so-ever he chose? Was it not Pope Boniface?

Bishop—Stay thy blasphemy! Holy Church can do no wrong. Confess and I will absolve thee, even thy outrages on holy vessels, relics and sanctuaries. The mercy of the church has no limit to the penitent sinner. You know you robbed convents and monasteries.

Wallace—I did smoke monks out for they were sent by Edward to supplant our Scottish priests and their houses were nests to succur his cause.

Bishop—Edward was called by his Holiness to be your King and fealty to him was your due. In what he did, he was within his right.

Wallace—Answer me. What right had the Pope to declare Scotland was his heritage and his to bestow as he deemed fit?

Bishop—Wretched man, you are persevering in thy sin. You have only a few brief hours to live. Listen to my exhortation that you may be counted among the blessed. It is a fearful thing to die under the censure of Holy Church. Even now, if thou wilt promise to swear him fealty, I will plead with the King to spare your life, and, mayhap, show you kindness.

Wallace—Thou smooth-tongued shaveling! Think you, I am to be terrified by your pretended authority from heaven or seduced by your influence with your King. Curse me with book and candle, tell your King to rend me limb from limb, but my soul, in spite of you both, will return to the God who implanted in my bosom hatred of cant and wrong. Be gone, you are the tool of a wicked tyrant, and I defy both you and him.

(Exit Bishop)

Wallace—True what he said, my life is narrowed to hours. Had I to live it over again I would do what I have done. Cut short as it will soon be, my life cannot have been lived in vain. The sower who has bestowed on mother earth the best seed he has, lays him down to sleep in full trust it will grow and bear many fold. I have scattered the seeds of freedom o'er the glens and hillsides of my country, and may I not now lay down my head on a bloody pillow in the hope these seeds shall not die, but living in other bosoms, grow until the usurper is driven forth from the land of my love. Oh, for a whiff in this stifling den of the breeze now blowing over her moors of blooming heather and a glimpse of her dear hills.

Warder—(Throwing open the door.) Another would speak to thee.

(The visitor, seeing Wallace stretched on the floor, spurns him with his foot.)

Wallace—Am I a dog to be kicked?

Edward—Thou art a dog, and shall have a dog's fate unless you listen to reason. I am your anointed King. Pay me homage, swear fealty to me, and the sun that should see thee hanged, will light you on your way to Scotland as my deputy. I know your power with her people to reconcile them to my rule. Give me your hand in token you accept, and the fetters will drop from your limbs. Be my trusted liegeman and I, Edward Plantagenet, will ennoble you and you shall no longer be open to the reproach of the Barons.

Wallace—You Edward? Thou dost mock me.

Edward—Ho. warder! Fetch a taper hither. (To Wallace) Thou hast seen me in battle and I have seen thee.

Wallace—It is true! In your stern features I discern my country's oppressor.

Edward—'Tis false, not her oppressor but her friend, who would mate her with England, and so be her benefactor. You have been my marplot. When I have had a death grip of France, in Gascony or on the Garonne and about to complete my triumph, word would come of a fresh outbreak in Scotland and I had to return, unclasping my prize. Do my will, undertake to keep my realm of the north in repose and thou shalt contribute to my conquest of France, making thereby Scotland happy and prosperous. You know how to manage her people and reconcile them to my rule.

Wallace—Scotland is small and it is poor, but it is the home of a people who would rather starve, yea die, than give up their independence. You tempt me to betray them. Do your worst, I stand faithful to my native land and to my ain folk. Were I free of these chains you would not stir from here.

Edward—Thou base-born churl, perish as you deserve. When Edward asks he brooks no refusal.

(*Exit*

(*Church chimes heard.*)

Wallace—That sound tells me my hour is near. Soon will I greet Marion and her who was dearer to me than even she—my mother. I call to memory how, morn and even, she bade me kneel beside her while she prayed. The God she revered, who sustains me in this my darkest peril (kneels) I beseech to have pity on my country. Bring to nothingness the plots of her oppressors, give to her people undying love for their homes. And oh, grant this my heart wish, that on every home in bonny Scotland you will bestow content, yielding cheerful obedience to daily toil.

Scene VII, Westminster Hall. Five Judges on the bench.

Chief Justice—Produce the prisoner.

(Wallace led in, a wreath of laurel on his head.)

Chief Justice—Let the indictment be read.

The Clerk—The prisoner, you William Wallace, are charged with acts of sedition, homicide, spoliation, setting fire and other felonies against the laws of the realm and the peace and safety of your lord, King Edward.

Chief Justice—We have here before us a persistent traitor, who has refused the King's grace, led in rebellions, set up a parliament, and ruled Scotland as if he were lord superior. More, he has invaded England, committing horrible atrocities. He, rejecting the King's grace, has been doomed to death. Besides being a traitor to the King he has wrought grievous hurt to Holy Church, which brings another penalty. He has burned monasteries, with bodies of holy saints, relics, and holy vessels, so that besides having his body cut into four parts, his lungs, heart and liver shall be burnt.

Wallace—I am a free-born Scot, and never did homage to the man you call King. How, then, can I be a traitor to him?

Chief Justice—You have no right to speak. As an outlaw you are brought here to be sentenced.

Wallace—I am not subject to your laws. I deny your authority and scorn this pretended court.

Chief Justice—Silence! Take away this outlaw, tie him to the tails of horses, and let them drag him to a place of execution.

The Lord Mayor—So perish all his Majesty's enemies!

Wallace—(Pushing aside an officer) For this judgment may God have mercy on you and on the King whose tools you are. You can kill me; you cannot kill my country. Scotland shall be free!

(Church chimes heard.)

(Wallace dragged out. Soft music, Scots
wha hae, in lowest minor key.)

The End.

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